

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF MUSIC

November 25, 2013

Oral Report of the Executive Director

Samuel Hope

Mr. Hope presented the following report on the occasion of his final NASM Annual Meeting as Executive Director, following 38 years of service.

Serving as Executive Director of NASM has been a great honor and pleasure. An honor because of the opportunity to serve a great cause. A pleasure because of constant interaction with colleagues connected to something bigger than themselves, colleagues holding fast to content and substance. Every year the sense of honor grew, as did the pleasure in our work together. Looking back, that work individually and together has resulted in a massive aggregation of true wealth for the work of music. Led by its member institutions and their administrators and faculties, and supported by NASM, this wealth contains far more than endowments, buildings, and equipment. It contains people and programs that engage content and do the work of music. It contains aspiration, and expertise, and will, and a vast record of achievement. It contains commitment to perpetual engagement with music on the part of institutions large and small. And it contains the beauty of music itself, pouring forth from your students, faculties, and alumni.

NASM is a great organization because it serves something beyond itself. It is able to serve this kind of wealth building, because of its values and its fealty to the nature and substance of music. Its principles, approach, and standards are consistent with the thing that it is working for and with the manners in which that work is done. In a few moments our president will speak more about these values and consider them in terms of artistic mission and the future. The connection between NASM and the art of music is so strong, so multilayered, and so deeply influential, because music itself is at the center of its people. This centering is a primary force in the kind of transcendence we have been speaking about during this meeting.

In 1924, when NASM was founded, Calvin Coolidge was elected President of the United States. Lenin died. Fascists under Mussolini gained in the Italian elections. Hearings on the Teapot Dome oil scandal were held in Washington. Paul Whiteman commissioned George Gershwin to compose "Rhapsody in Blue." Hubble proved that there were galaxies beyond the Milky Way. A tornado destroyed 25 towns in five Midwestern and Southern states. Nobel Prizes were awarded for the discovery of x-ray spectroscopy and the electrocardiograph. A New York to San Francisco airmail service test flight took 27 hours. There were 2.5 million radios in use in the United States, up from 5,000 sets in 1920. Koussevitzky became conductor of the Boston Symphony. Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*, Strauss's *Intermezzo*, Janacek's *The Cunning Little Vixen*, and Sibelius's *Symphony 7* made their appearances.

In other words, the world was being the world, and artistic life was being artistic life. The themes of politics, financial scandal, scientific advancement, natural disaster, mass media, performance, and artistic creation underlie the items I have read for 1924. They are still with us today. They have been in NASM's context for 89 years. We have all worked together in the context produced by these and other themes during my years as your Executive Director. But NASM has not just played along with the particular variations on perpetual themes that a specific time produces. It

has fashioned its own themes and created its own variations as times demanded. As time continues, it is useful to remember something: even though the events I mentioned are left to resonate as history and the lessons of history, the works of art I mentioned are still with us in their original glorious form. They still speak in whole and in full as they did the first time. This, too, is a lesson of history.

During my years at NASM, the Association has been blessed with outstanding leadership elected by representatives of member institutions. Time does not permit naming everyone, but I would like to read the list of Presidents with whom I have served: Everett Timm, Warner Imig, Robert Bays, Thomas Miller, Robert Glidden, Robert Werner, Frederick Miller, Harold Best, William Hipp, David Tomatz, Karen Wolff, Daniel Sher, Don Gibson, and Mark Wait. This is an honor roll of brilliant administrators with a deep love of music and the people who make it possible. Each is unique, but they all shared the same permanent question no matter what the topic: how better to serve the NASM membership.

The gratitude I have to all of these individuals and to Sue Haug who is our Vice President and President-elect, and to the other members of the Executive Committee, is deep and real, but it is also a symbol of the gratitude I have for all of the officers, Commission members, Board members, and intuitional representatives who have contributed so much to the richness, integrity, and majesty of the Association's work and record. I am deeply honored that former Presidents Don Gibson, Robert Glidden, William Hipp, Thomas Miller, and Daniel Sher, and Executive Committee members David Woods, Robert Fink, and Florence Miller, wife of the late former President Frederick Miller, are with us at this meeting.

My work with NASM has also led to similar work with the fields of art and design, dance, and theatre. Of course, each art form is different. Personalities are attracted to and are shaped by the nature of each discipline. But still, among the arts there is a shared spirit, a shared habit of mind, a creative energy, and a need to work together. As the first and oldest arts accrediting agency, NASM has been in a unique position to provide assistance to its independent sister organizations, especially in their early years of development. Today, through the Council of Arts Accrediting Associations, there is a common forum to work for the good of all on matters of common interest and responsibility, while retaining the essential independence of each association. The influence of NASM's values and approaches over the years has made a significant positive impact on the arts in American higher education as a whole.

In music, there have been opportunities to work with staff and elected leaders of other national organizations such as the College Music Society, the Music Teachers National Association, and the National Association for Music Education. These occasions have influenced progress for music in our society. It is wonderful to see great ideas for music move forward with the participation of so many thousands of music professionals acting in different settings, many of whom are unaware of the multi-organization cooperation and parallel action that are working in the background.

I am also in constant remembrance of the wonderful relationship that NASM has with the European Association of Conservatoires. This relationship is a model of international cooperation and mutual support between two independent organizations with common music-centered goals, each serving institutions in different regions of the world. I mention in gratitude the leadership of the late AEC Presidents Ian Horsbrugh from the United Kingdom and Johannes Johansson from Sweden, the current AEC President Pascale De Groote from Belgium, and AEC Executive Directors, formerly Martin Prchal, and now, Jeremy Cox. As was the case with NASM, these leaders also represent the leaders, faculties, and work of many individual institutions that continue the work of music in their place and for their time. I wish to thank Martin Prchal for

being with us at the meeting and for delivering his thoughtful and generous greetings from our European colleagues.

NASM is an organization built and sustained through the continuing contributions of volunteers. But NASM could not operate effectively without an outstanding staff. The present staff was introduced yesterday. Each one of them makes a vitally important contribution to the work we do on your behalf, and it has been a source of great satisfaction to work with them and their predecessors. Four present staff members have served as my assistant for a period of time: Willa Shaffer, Chira Kirkland, and Mark Marion in the past, and Sarah Yount at present. A special thank you to each of them for their support and their many contributions to my own work.

Today, we are nearing the end of a yearlong transition. On January 1, 2014, Karen P. Moynahan will become Executive Director of NASM, the fifth person to serve in that role. Karen joined the NASM staff in 1981. An NASM meeting in Dallas was one of her first staff experiences. Fortunately, we did not scare her away. Since that time she has become a nationally esteemed expert in accreditation, statistical information, professional development, and policy analysis, the four primary services that NASM provides. She not only knows what NASM does, but she knows and understands the contexts that influence the work of the Association. Her list of professional contacts is long and distinguished. The officers of NASM and the other three arts accrediting associations separately made the right decision, not just because of Karen's great expertise and experience, but also because of the values, principles, acuity, and willingness to help that she brings to the work that the associations continue to do. Many of you have worked with Karen over the years, and you have confidence as I and other members of the Executive Committee do that the core operational values and principles of NASM will continue to inform the daily staff and program development work of the association. Conditions for continuing transcendence on the basics are present. A firm foundation is present for continuing evolution and change informed by wisdom constantly sought.

I also want to thank Karen for being an outstanding colleague for over three decades. It has been a pleasure to work with her, to see her grow professionally, and to see her reputation for expertise and service increase nationally. Karen continues to bring an extraordinary personal dedication to NASM and to the work of the National Office. I cannot thank her enough for what she has done over the years to support my efforts, those of the entire staff, and most especially the efforts of member and applicant institutions.

I wish to thank my wife Judy for her unfailing love and support, and for her generous spirit, and for her deep respect and affection for the people of NASM. I could not have served in this role without her.

Before I close, I want to say a few words about accreditation. We all know the components of accreditation: standards, self-study, visit and visitors' report, response to the visitors' report, commission action. We know the work of accreditation and the results of accreditation. These matters are all important. They describe the elements of interaction among institutions and programs and accrediting organizations.

For a moment I ask you to abstract these elements from your experience with NASM or any other accreditation process. I ask you to think of these elements and the sequenced system they create as an empty form, a lifeless set of operational steps.

Now, I ask you to consider all the different sets of values and purposes that can be used to animate this form. These values and purposes can be democratic or authoritarian, for example, but not both in the same organization. They can range across many sets of contrasting values, such as those I spoke about yesterday, and those our president will discuss in a few minutes.

These days the word “accreditation” does not define itself. One has to know the values and principles informing the work of a particular organization.

It is important to remember that American higher education generated the concept of accreditation using American principles such as representation, reciprocity, consent of the governed, checks and balances, and so forth. The result was a democratic peer-based system with several strategic purposes. One of the most important of these strategic purposes was and is to have a non-governmental mechanism through which the academy and the professions control academic decision-making and the destiny of academic work. This mechanism protects local institutional decision-making and destiny-setting first by respecting it and second by providing common consensus-based frameworks of quality indicators developed, owned, and operated by the academy itself, frameworks that leave detailed decisions at the institutional and programmatic level. This concept for accreditation is in the tradition of self-governance that informs democratic institutions of all kinds.

Today accreditation in the United States and elsewhere is under great pressure to keep the form and name of accreditation, but change the values that animate it and shape its decisions about standards, and self study, and so on. In too many cases, the change proposed is from democracy to autarky. When these values take hold, those being accredited become subjects rather than participants. Common ownership is lost. And ultimately, strategic control of academic decision-making and academic destiny can be lost.

I have sought a brief way to encapsulate the way that NASM and the other arts accreditors continue to approach accreditation. I offer for your consideration “Accreditation as Learning.” Everything we do in NASM is connected to the humble business of learning on every level. “Accreditation as learning” is so much more positive, effective, productive, and transcendent than “accreditation as process,” or “accreditation as power,” or “accreditation as personalities.”

NASM is a great continuity of learning. It was a great professional honor to join this continuity in 1975. I started on Roger Bacon Drive in October. With us at this meeting is Bob Glidden, my immediate predecessor, who was on the Executive Committee that hired me, along with such luminaries as Everett Timm, Warner Imig, and Himie Voxman. I thank Bob and his colleagues at the time, as well as successive Executive Committees, for their confidence, support, and wisdom as we tried to do our best to fulfill the responsibilities the NASM membership had given us.

At first, my learning curve was steep. Then it got steeper. Along the way we enjoyed ourselves. There were the many letters from eighth graders that began, “Dear Mr. Hope, Please send all your information.” The address on Roger Bacon Drive gave rise to letters addressed to Dr. Roger Bacon. The staff drafted a response, not sent, that began with, “We regret to announce that Dr. Roger Bacon passed away. You will be pleased to know that the spirit of his scientific inquiries was carried on by Isaac Newton, Albert Einstein, and many others.”

Yes, I came to the NASM staff one October day in 1975, full of expectation and aspiration, and on another December day at the end of 2013, I will leave it confident, fulfilled, thankful, and ready to help the arts and higher education from a new place and perspective. I consider myself fortunate and blessed beyond measure to have held, for a time, the NASM Executive Directorship in trust for the content and the people of music, and for the special group of people and institutions that is NASM. I thank you for the Honorary Membership, for granting me Emeritus status, and for all your kind words of appreciation, and for years of support and service to music and to NASM. My cup runneth over.

Best wishes to all of you, to Karen, and to NASM, with high expectations for ever-advancing achievements in the years ahead.